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## WALL DECORATION.

BY E. MAROLDA.



GREAT deal of modern decoration shows a general want of harmony in the tints themselves, and a looseness of reasoning in their tones. In my opinion there should be a reason for every color and every shade that is laid on. Take as a simple example the painting of a common paneled door. Now there are usually three important reasons for doing this piece of work: first, the wood

is to be protected; second, the color of the door is to be harmonized with its environment; third, the object of the woodwork is to be made manifest by means of color. The first two items explain themselves; the third one is in most cases ignored, and yet it is quite as important as the others, for on its proper carrying out depends whether the work shall be logical or not. Now, if we had to paint this door say in different shades of green we should reason thus:—Since it is in the framing that the strength of the door lies, then the framing should be painted in a *stronger* green than the panels. That is all. It is a very simple plan, but it contains the basis of most of my color schemes. Take a little more elaborate example. In a certain room the frieze is supported by a series of pilasters having simple capitals, bases and pedestals. In this case the frieze rests on the pilasters, which in their turn rest on the pedestals. It follows that the latter should not be painted white, yet we have seen this done, and a very weak appearance was the result, as you may imagine; for white is suggestive of delicacy, fragility. The parts which have the appearance of bearing the greatest load and uniting the different members together should be in stronger colors than the rest. In the case in point we will begin at the bottom. The pedestal should be colored in stronger tones than the rest, particularly in the top and bottom moldings; the middle part or the body may be a little lighter, but not so light as the shaft; the capital and base should be colored in stronger tones than the shaft itself, while the cornice and architrave should be in stronger colors than the frieze. Similarly the skirting of a room should be in stronger tones than the wall, as it has or should have the appearance of supporting the wall; the color of the moldings which mark off the dado should be stronger than that part which lies between it and the skirting. Strong colors must be used for those parts which surround and protect open spaces. To avoid monotony, gilding should be laid on those moldings of delicate section which stand a chance of being lost sight of if painted in the same tone as the adjacent parts. This rule applies to the decoration of the cornice and architrave. We are rather in favor of a liberal use of gold in respect to the last-mentioned

details, particularly where the frieze is elaborately decorated; besides, its *protective* appearance is more emphatic than any color, however strong its tone.

By following these simple hints a scheme of one color can be satisfactorily carried out without much expenditure of the artistic faculties, and harmony and play in the various shades of it readily obtained. But such a method is very often apt to become insipid, whereas harmony obtained by what in France is called *le mariage des tons ou des couleurs* is far more brilliant and a more abundant source of delight to the eye. All simple and composite colors can be married together for the reason that there is almost always one such shade of each which is marriageable to a like shade of another. Here lies all the difficulty, for we can count on the fingers of one hand the few who can act as priest at such weddings. Once these marriages are performed without consulting the two shades there the result must remain silent tormentors of the educated eye. Abroad the priests can be counted by hundreds. In Paris

are *Ateliers de peinture décorative* separated from the upholsterers' shops. In America the only consulting temple for decorative art is the upholsterer. He has no training in the art of harmony, and knows and cares little about color. The amount of money lavished on American interiors is great and the result unsatisfactory for that reason, but the continued success of those classes of instruction in decoration and painting generally, of which we now and then have reports in *THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER*, gives us great hopes that this state of things will gradually give way to something better.

## DECORATIVE NOTE.

THE beautiful coloring of certain varieties of glass now produced in Germany, and which is said to far excel some of the most noted French specimens, is an art practiced by the glassblower at the furnace, by means of an apparatus consisting of a sheet iron cylinder, 20 in. long and 8 in. diameter, standing vertically, and having a similar cylinder riveted across the top. *Kuhlow's German Trade Review* says that in the lower cylinder is an opening into which an iron ladle can pass, and the horizontal cylinder is provided with doors at either end, the one nearest the operator being so arranged that the blowpipes can be supported when the door is closed in a horizontal split running to its middle, the object to be treated being held inside. While the glassblower is reheating his work for the last time in the furnace, an attendant takes the long-handled iron ladle, which has been heated red hot, shakes into it about a spoonful of a specially prepared chemical mixture, and places the bowl of the ladle quickly in the opening provided for it in the vertical cylinder. The mixture immediately gives off vapor, which rises to the horizontal cylinders, where, meanwhile, the blower has placed his work, supported by the blowpipe and heated to an even red, turning it rapidly in the vapor. In a short time the object is covered with a changeable luster, is removed from the pipe and tempered like other ware in an ordinary oven, then cut, engraved, painted or gilded, as desired.



AFRICA. DECORATIVE WALL PANEL. BY PROF. G. STURM.